

The Republican.

No. 23, Vol. 8.] LONDON, Friday, Dec. 12, 1823. [PRICE 6d.

TO THE REVEREND ISAAC CARTER, OF PORTSEA, WHO CLAIMS TO BE CONSIDERED A WONDER!

Dorchester Gaol, Nov. 21, year 1823,
of the Christian Mythology.

SIR,

THE consequence of my addressing you in public will be, that you will cease to be a WONDER! This would not have been done had not your observations on my third letter, of which you have only made extracts for your publication, conveyed to the public sentiments at variance with what those extracts exhibit when read with their context. I wish you had published that letter as a whole, or passed it unnoticed. But as comment should follow the thing to be commented upon, I will first introduce the contents of a packet which I received from you on the 18th instant.

MR. CARLILE.

SIR,

Nov. 15, 1823.

Style apart: To believe that the inclosed letters were written with less intention to reprove Mr. Carlile, than to convince him that the writer is in his day, "*a Wonder to many*," will concede as much as at present is expected by

Sir, your obedient Servant,

ISAAC CARTER.

THE UNGUARDED ATHEIST.

In a Letter Correspondence between Mr. Richard Carlile, (in Dorchester Gaol; and Isaac Carter Minister of the Word of God, in Portsea. Addressed to the former, in Two Letters. Price Sixpence, each.

(Believers,) do not they blaspheme that *worthy name* by which ye are called? James 2, 7.

And blaspheme the God of heaven because of their pains and sores: and, repented not of their deeds. Rev. 16, 11,

Printed and Published by R. Carlile, 84, Fleet Street.

FIRST LETTER.

SIR,

RECENTLY having read in a provincial paper that some Divines were solicited to grant you an audience. Recollecting that when myself in prison—whatever; howsoever ludicrous and farcical—as well as solemn, was, in a dungeon—entertaining. I have seen some strokes of your pen, and not doubting that you command some leisure moments, for your amusement send four questions under full persuasion that you acknowledge One Supreme Being—God.

QUESTIONS.

Infinitely, perfectly, and eternally—Wise.—
Must he not know what is Sin?

Infinitely, perfectly, and eternally—Holy.—
Must he not, wheresoever, and in whomsoever it is found—
hate all sin?

Infinitely, perfectly, and eternally—Just.—
Must he not punish what he so hates?

Infinitely, perfectly, and eternally powerful.—
Must he not for such punishment bring the delinquent to his bar?

Know, Sir, and believe that though a preacher of the Gospel near forty years I make no pretension to scholastic education. As this is sent for an idle minute, perhaps, from the celebrity of your name your remarks may engage the pen of one of those learned Gentlemen.

Truly, Sir, I admire sound reasoning—And am at command on these Questions.

Your humble Servant,
ISAAC CARTER.

Residing at No. 29, Amelia Row, Portsea.

Mr. Carlile, Printer, &c. Dorset Gaol,

August 14, 1823.

SIR,

Dorchester Gaol, August 24, 1823.

ACKNOWLEDGING the receipt of yours of August 14, I have to say in answer, that the chief of my study hitherto has been to know my own ignorance.

I have deeply inquired about the “One supreme being—God;”

about which so much is said and so little known; and I have found that *I am so ignorant as to know nothing at all about any such a being, nor can I find, any other being, clergyman or what-not, that can communicate any kind of knowledge upon the subject, but a knowledge of that same ignorance which I acknowledge.*—Consequently, being assured that no man can believe beyond his knowledge, I begin to discover that no man can believe in “One supreme being—God.”

I believe in an Almighty Power; but what that power is, I know not. If you will order from your Bookseller No. 3, Vol. 8, Republican you will find some elucidation of this matter, in a letter addressed to the Editor of the Hampshire County Chronicle. In speaking of an *Almighty Power*, I must explain, or you will fancy that I have contradicted myself.—

I am sensible that there must be a power, equal as a cause, for every effect that I see in existence, and this, though I do not know the cause, is not believing beyond knowledge, because I know the effect must have a cause.

This answer leaves me no room to answer any of your four questions, because the first of them has no foundation; consequently the other three can have none. I trace the whole of human happiness to morality, and the whole of human misery to religion. I separate morality from religion, and find that, what is really religion is really immoral; because it has no foundation in truth, and is so far an expensive system, as not only to injure the mental, but the physical-property-producing powers of mankind.

I will reason with any man upon the grounds of *what is religion?* and *what is morality?* Here we shall have something tangible; in your questions there is nothing tangible; they begin and end in hypothesis.

Thanking you for your kind attention,

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

RICHARD CARLILE.

Rev. I. Carter, 29, Amelia Row, Portsea.

SECOND LETTER.

SIR,

To mine, dated August 14, your answer dated August 24, was by me received August 25, I now reply.

For your (apparent) humbleness in the sentence “*Thanking you for your kind attention, I am, Sir, &c. &c.*”

That I am so pleased with the wisdom which your letter has communicated that, I do not feel capable of returning equal-thanks but by requesting your consent that for the benefit of society—my letter and your answer thereto may forthwith be printed

pleasure; especially, having in the most candid manner granted his free consent (*his letters correctly observed*) to publish the same in *my own way*.

After some prayer to the one supreme being—God, and many, and various surmises on the subject—pro, and con; I thus reasoned—

First.—As all things are possible with God; that Mr. Carlile is a brand not to be plucked out of the fire——Who can tell?

Second.—What benefit to the public, and what gratitude to God would be expressed on his (known) conversion to truth—Who can tell?

Third.—Of the thousands which his writings have impoisoned; whether one strayed lamb from Jesus's-fold entangled in his snares may not be delivered——Who can tell?

Fourth.—That in reading this, the Christian may not discover somewhat more of the depths of Satan, and for being kept stedfast in the faith once delivered to the saints—shall not increase his joy in the Lord—Who can tell?

CHARACTERS

INVITING REASON'S JUDGEMENT ON

No eternal God—CARLILE.

An eternal God—CARTER.

I have deeply inquired about the one supreme being God.

CARLILE.

Instead of proof of a seared conscience, proof of one that would not relax in labour to find and know that there is an eternal God.

CARTER.

But the world by wisdom knew not God.—Their eyes hath he blinded. Pharoah (and doubtless his council) said—I know not the Lord.—They worship they know not what. To the unknown God.

BIBLE.

Nor can I find any clergyman or who-else that can communicate any kind of knowledge upon this subject.

CARLILE.

Natural, candid, and incontrovertible; and demanding reason's aid, and social sympathy.

CARTER.

The OX *knoweth* its owner, &c.—They *know* not me, saith the Lord.—God is great, and we *know* him not.

BIBLE.

In speaking of an Almighty power, I must explain, or you will FANCY that I have contradicted myself.

CARLILE.

In an instructor of the public, self-contradiction insinuates that, the instructions have their birth in indigested cogitations more than in unwarped reasoning. Conscience still not seared.

CARTER.

If I (by self-contradiction) build again the things which I destroyed I make myself a public transgressor.

BIBLE.

Thanking you for your kind attention, I am, Sir, &c. &c.

CARLILE.

Besides, to rouse from reasoning on *sterile*-hypothesis, to reason on reason's *fertile*-womb was the pen for mine of August 14. As you return me your thanks for an action only becoming a man reasoning on an UNKNOWN-GOD; You suggest that till your deep inquiries have an issue you cannot be satisfied in your darling Theme, *i. e.* no one Supreme being—God.—

CARTER.

Deliver me from wicked and unreasonable men for (to believe there is a God) all men have not faith. If they reject the word of the Lord, what wisdom is there in them? The fool hath said in his heart there is no God..

BIBLE.

What most writers sedulously prevent interrupting *their* lines, appears very intrusive in *yours*; viz, *the giant I*. I am sensible. I must explain. I know the cause. I trace the whole. I will reason. I separate.

I separate morality from religion.

CARLILE.

To disown and deny the eternal-God; and reject the bible as his infallible word, yet be religious; excites to question *what that religion is, which such an one separates from morality?*

CARTER.

I will reason with any man upon the grounds of what is religion and what is morality?

CARLILE.

The rules for my last 40 years' reasoning have been the Bible (which is undoubtedly believed to be the inspired word of the eternal God;) and my senses of sight and feeling accompanied by an inclination to be thoughtful. You assert that the *Old Testament* is a Persian-history in a *Jewish dress*: and the *New Testament altogether fabulous*. And, as you pretend to ability to decypher the cause, progress, and lasting stimulus of my *present religion*; you insinuate your right and power to controul even my right and power to think, but as you shall dictate. Submission to this would leave me no rule for reasoning; otherwise, with confidence that the Atheist would stagger, the challenge might be accepted.

CARTER.

CONTRADICTIONS.

Carlile—against Carlile.

I believe in an Almighty Power.

No man can believe in one Supreme Being—God.

No man can believe in one Supreme Being—God.

I have deeply inquired about the one Supreme Being—God.

No man can believe beyond his knowledge.

I believe in an Almighty Power.

I am sensible.

No, I believe.

I believe in an Almighty Power.

No, I am sensible of that Almighty Power.

When in Edinburgh to believe that there is in Dorchester, a house (or gaol)—rational!

When confined within that house—sensible!

A demonstration.—An Almighty power cannot be exerted but by an Almighty-being: an Almighty-being, being before and unequalled by any other power is necessarily the uncreated, independent, self-sufficient, as self-existent, therefore, the one Supreme being, and eternal-God.

CARTER.

No man can believe in one Supreme being—God.

CARLILE.

Sir, I believe in one supreme being—God: but because I (but one) of millions so believe, to be declared, and challenged that I am NO MAN, more becomes the inside than (a field) the outside of a prison. As the most learned and the most honourable in church and state; as well as the most illiterate and obscure are the objects of this presumptuous conclusion, in which whether reason, religion, morality, deism, atheism, or dogmatism is most prominent—for the instruction of the community is a task devolving on Mr. Carlile instead of

I. CARTER.

ANIMADVERSIONS FOR THE SECOND LETTER.

THIS led me (or, I was led) into the company of Deistical books and Deists, of whom I had not previously heard any thing: *and the Suckling infant was not more a Stranger to them.*—

CARLILE.

Probably, by the religious and unprejudiced, this honest acknowledgement will be thus read.

First.—*Why, surely*; before Mr. Carlile became acquainted with the *medium* of Deism he believed in, and was disposed to preach the necessity of faith in the supreme being—God.

Second.—By (or through) his acquaintance with that medium, it appears that his faith in an Almighty-power had its birth and receives its support *from words* spoken or written by Deists.

Third.—Therefore, his argument on his senses, *seeing, knowing*, as the root of his faith in that Almighty-power is, by himself nullified, Or,

Fourthly.—Granting all other Deists to be dead, and their books burned; for the defence as support of his chosen and favourite hypothesis—he retains but *fancy*, or a dream; *I begin to discover, &c.*

CARTER.

I believe in an Almighty-power.

CARLILE.

Cannot that Almighty-power create in me faith to believe in the one Supreme-being—God? If denied, the object of Carlile's belief is imaginary: if granted, his hypothesis has no foundation; therefore he believes without any root or ground for his faith.

CARTER.

If you will order from your bookseller No. 3, vol. 8—republican you will find some elucidation of *this matter*.

CARLILE.

Not disdaining the perusal of your republican, but, as elucidation of this matter by the bible has the most decided preference, your hints will not be attended to by the moralist.

CARTER.

That to believe the bible (though written by inspiration of God, the one Supreme-being, one Almighty Power, is, for wisdom, authenticity, or utility in religion, or morality) equal to our dictates, denied.

CARLILE.

If you will order your bookseller to furnish you with Jude's epistle, you may by carefully reading find that some are fore-ordained to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire—in order to obtain some elucidation of *this matter*.

CARTER.

I trace the **WHOLE** of human misery to religion.

CARLILE.

All nations have been religious; but some in all nations have not through their religion been rendered personally miserable: therefore, the tracer has traced a phantom, and concluded that, which he cannot prove.

CARTER.

That one Almighty Power in which I believe, possibly can know what is sin—denied: therefore, your first question has no foundation; consequently the other three (alike founded) have none.

CARLILE.

Instead of reasoning on what is religion, the reasoner (though a believer in an Almighty-power) appears to seek a shelter in a mask of sophism.

CARTER.

Mr. Carlile's strongest argument for Atheism now, generously placed at the disposal of—I. Carter.

The Argument. If my understanding was as unconfused to know, as my senses are quick to perceive and feel the effective proof of an Almighty Power, my deep enquiries about the One Supreme being—God, had not been so fruitless as to oblige me (ingenuously) to confess that, "*about any such a being, I know nothing at all:*" for, I acknowledge that power because I see and feel the effects thereof; or,

All religion to be suspected as erroneous when not grounded in the Senses seeing, feeling! therefore, the senses form the ground of the Argument.—

Proof; I believe because I know, I know because I see and feel. My sight and feeling senses.

Explained. I believe in an Almighty Power, because I know that I am in existence; then, what I see in existence, is the root of my faith in that Almighty Power.

CARLILE.

The senses, seeing, feeling, are the ground of my religion*.

Therefore, by Richard Carlile my religion is indubitably confirmed to be a clear, full, and a *religious demonstration*†.

CARTER.

* See, The Wonder, (or life of the author) No. 2, page 82.

† Republican, No. 11, vol. 8, page 334—*We all assent instantly to whatever is demonstrated to our senses!*

CARLILE.

Or, as demonstration is the only propagator of truth—that Richard Carlile acknowledgeth the truth to be (preached, or) propagated by me, and that *in most clear and fullest demonstration* is unquestionable*.

CARTER.

(Insinuation.—I believe that my 8 vol. republican is, for Sanctity of religion, and purity in morality, equal if not superior to the Bible; because I know myself the author; but, as I do not see in existence the author of the Bible)—*No Man* can believe in the one Supreme being—God.

CARLILE.

That which was from the beginning which we have heard; (yea), which we have seen with our eyes; which we have looked upon; and, (which) our hands have handled.

BIBLE.

(ATHEIST; STAND AGHAST!)

In speaking of an *Almighty Power* I must explain, or you will fancy that I have contradicted myself.

CARLILE.

I must explain, &c.: till twenty-one years of age I was goaded on to be most immoral and profane. I did not believe in one supreme being—God; nor in an Almighty Power: therefore, that ignorance and insensibility are the parents of Atheism, not denied.

CARTER.

I am sensible then, that there must be a power equal as a cause for every effect that I see in existence; and this, though I do not know the cause, is not believing beyond knowledge.

CARLILE.

During my twenty-second year I was made most keenly to feel, first, That from my youth, I had lived in sin. Secondly, Born in that in which I lived. Thirdly, Conscience, severely punishing for the same, in suggesting that I had an immortal soul; and, by my own sin had exposed myself to eternal death. Fourthly, Under such *sensibilities* because the Bible invited me to believe in my one Judge, the one Supreme being—God; of all books, to me that was the most offensive†; till subsequently, he was pleased to persuade me that he had forgiven my sins, and saved me with an everlasting salvation. Then, by reference to principle and profession; to intention and practice; *I could reason* with any man, that my faith was grounded in knowledge; my Knowledge grounded in sense; I saw, I felt the effect; and, to this day in

* Republican, No. 11, vol. 8, page 334; "*Demonstration is the only propagator of truth.*" CARLILE.

† See, *The Wonder, or life of the author*, No. 3, page 107.

great humility, in knowledge, in faith, in wonder, in holy adoration, I "believe in, and worship the One Supreme being—God."

CARTER.

I know there must be a cause for every effect.

CARLILE.

I felt the effect but knew not there was a cause.

CARTER.

I know the effect, and that the effect must have a cause.

CARLILE.

I felt myself full of misery through sin but knew not who caused me to know that sin was the cause of my misery.

CARTER.

There must be a power equal to every effect.

CARLILE.

Many years my pleasure had increased with my immorality; my sin abstractedly considered not the cause of my misery; therefore, *the wrath of the one Supreme being—God*, the avenger of my sin, was the cause of my misery. Besides, others my companions equally immoral had not their pleasure interrupted by a feeling dread of the wrath of the one Supreme being—God. *Is this believing beyond knowledge?*

CARTER.

I do not for a moment question the truth and sincerity of every word you have (in your life titled *the wonder*, published; or) put upon paper. All your subsequent ability in preaching, has been the result of a *powerful excitement* on a powerful mind: your first, and subsequent efforts have been the result of deep thought. *My sufferings are lost—are nothing, when placed by the side of yours.*

CARLILE.

Sincerely wishing that you may not lose sight of this acknowledgement: and being to my faith and doctrine, &c. *the first* of my religious opponents so candidly to make such a generous concession, accept my grateful return.

CARTER.

I do not for a moment question the truth and *sincerity* of every word you have put upon paper.

CARLILE.

Deliberately to oppose a declaration so explicitly made would be proof that, not *sound reason*, nor *real religion*, nor *pure morality*, but reprehensible ignorance of the subject, and the most malicious hatred against the object must form the root of any, and all opposition to the same.

CARTER.

Especially, bearing in mind Mr. Carlile's free communication;

"What I write flows from a sincere heart and head, and I am never ashamed to see it correctly printed." See first letter, page 7.

I have to say that the chief of my study hitherto has been to know my own ignorance. And that I by improvement have found that no man can believe in "*One Supreme being—God: and, no man can stand before me.*"

CARLILE.

Thus publicly to confess that your *chief study has failed*; to be assured that your atheistical scheme has but a sandy foundation you invite and secure the faith of—

CARTER.

As an Almighty-power may exist without an existent-being competent to prove that such a power can exist—whoever believes in *that one Almighty-power*, may be a ghost, a devil, or what not, *he is no man*: I believe in that one Almighty-power; but do not believe that there is one supreme being—God; therefore boldly defy any man to stand before me.

CARLILE.

Some, though believers in that one Almighty-power, blasphemously scoff, and curse God and the King, and (devils in malice) look upward.

BIBLE.

Some, (even) devils believe and instead of scoff—tremble.

BIBLE.

Some, in holy adoration on the bended knee worship that Almighty power, the one Supreme-being—God; and in praying, Lord, save, or I perish; prove themselves men whose prudence in wisdom and holy-zeal for the defence of their faith the ground of pure morality, stimulate them to nauseate the daring and blasphemy of Carlile.

CARTER.

Time has witnessed the assent of the world to the British-character in health, wealth, and power, standing unrivalled on its map. Then, religion with one hand for pregnancy led British-commerce to the world's mart; and with the other the warrior to guard her safe return to enrich the nation's-lap with her labour-earnt store: her religion was founded in deep-rooted faith in the most holy and most glorious Trinity; *the one Supreme being—God*. Her safe arrival acknowledged by religion's irresistible-influence to attend the King as supreme, with the merchant and warrior; their train formed of imbodied wisdom, integrity, prudence, *stern-morality*, and holy zeal, among all ranks to bend the knee in holy adoration, express their gratitude, and confess their faith in their inexhaustible source of mercies—AN ALMIGHTY POWER.

Many years of deep inquiries the chief study of which to find such a being (as God) having failed, "*I begin to discover, &c.*" How gross; what immorality! Why not waited till you had ended the beginning of your discoveries so as to review the ground and revise the form as spirit of your own argument? Or, why,

till you had more cautiously considered my four questions as to conceal your profound reserve—saying, “*I now begin to discover, &c.*” you were not more reserved? Such a pointed study for the one object, the one Supreme being—God: in such deep inquiries, for such a length of time, especially in your correct mastership of the Persian language, chronology, and government as to conclude the bible to be a Persian history in a jewish-dress. **WONDERFUL DISCOVERY FOR THE NINETEENTH CENTURY!!!**

When you engaged with the students of the Rev. Mr. Bogue (Gosport) to become a preacher of the gospel it is not doubted that you intended to inculcate the bible as the word of God: consequently, with all argumentative as quotative energy to prove the existence of, and persuade the people to believe not only in an *Almighty Power*, but in the source thereof—*One Supreme being—God*. As your retreat from this sacred work was not from conviction that there is no God, nor that the bible is a jewish-fable, no; but from keen feelings of pecuniary deficiency. Why, on such retreat you so suddenly denied your Maker, and so deliberately insulted the nation, you have given me liberty to conclude you had and have two reasons; first, To seek other employ. Secondly, Till you had read my four questions you had not begun, &c. but as soon as you had considered them, then you grant me an explanation of those reasons.

First Reason:—From 1813, until 1817, I struggled with poverty and insufficiency of employ. Then matters became so bad, and the prospect so bad, that I resolved to look after other employ than that to which I was trained: I resolved to become a book-seller. This led me into the company of Deistical-books and Deists: of whom I had not previously heard any thing, and the suckling-infant was not more a stranger to them. The reading of PAINE's age of reason sent new lights into my mind, and I resolved it should do so for others.

CARLILE.

Whilst I devoutly deplore that your reasoning powers were so unguarded as so easily to be captivated; it is without reserve acknowledged that, the freedom and candour of your communications to a stranger obtain on bended knee before the one Supreme being—God, fervent prayers for your speedy, full, and final emancipation from these snares.

Paine's age of reason I have more than thrice read; likewise a little of Rousseau, Voltaire, Dr. Priestly, and others as well as Carlile, but do not yet feel that those sons of science have thrown one ray of light into my mind.

CARTER.

Second Reason:—Being of a romantic turn of mind I had conceived a notion that there was something laudable in going out to

instruct the heathen. I had *secret inclinations* to go on this errand; particularly as I was in the habit of meeting and conversing with some of David Bogue's (of Gosport) students: but, no sooner was it known that I was about to marry, than I found I was no longer wanted in that employ.

CARLILE.

When you engaged with the Rev. Mr. Bogue's students to become a preacher of the gospel (it is not doubted that) you intended to inculcate the bible as the word of God: consequently, with all argumentative, as quotative energy to prove the existence of, and persuade the people to believe not only in an *Almighty Power*, but in the source thereof,—One Supreme being—God. Your retreat from this sacred work was not from conviction that there is NO GOD; nor that the bible is a persian-fable, NO; but to remove pecuniary difficulties.

CARTER.

It is perceived and that with pain that according to your suggestions I am a cause of additional stimulus to you to prosecute with fresh vigour your favourite hypothesis.

I have no room to answer your questions because the first of them has no foundation; consequently the other three have none.

CARLILE.

Until you had perused my four questions you insinuate you had not *begun to discover*, &c. but so soon as you had considered them I am informed that you had begun to discover that no man can believe in the one Supreme being—God. In the desertion of such a colleague, whether pain or pleasure was most predominant themselves may judge: certain it is that the ground for union and separation was A MORSEL OF BREAD!

CARTER.

I separate morality from religion, and find that what is *really religion* is *really* immoral.

CARLILE.

NO GOD: NO BIBLE: NO BELIEVER—YET REAL RELIGION; *and real morality, too*; What is this!!

CARTER.

I (now) begin to discover that no man can believe in one Supreme being—God.

CARLILE.

Until you had more cautiously considered my four questions and waited till you had *ended the beginning* of your discoveries why conceal your profound reserve, (*timidly saying*) I now begin to discover, &c. Or, why on such a pointed study and such deep enquiries you were not *more reserved*? especially as you tempt me to believe that you are so complete a master of the persian language as to prove that, *the bible is a persian history in a Jewish-*

dress: **WONDERFUL DISCOVERY FOR THE NINETEENTH CENTURY!!**

CARTER.

Jew, Papist, Mahometan, Protestant—all (nationally considered profess, to) believe in the one Supreme being—God. To aver that among this body there is no (believing) man—although monstrous, is the ground of your argument—*Morality is the basis of human happiness.* The source of this morality is—what?

Morality is the basis of human happiness.

CARLILE.

Not only acknowledged but gloried in—but who besides Carlile ever laid the root of pure morality in arrogance and insult?

CARTER.

If ever I come through Hampshire again, I will by your leave have an interview with you.

CARLILE.

Till it shall be known that you have deeply repented of such blasphemy and insult—you are invited to believe that my dwelling is too moral to welcome such an immoral step to overtread the threshold of the same; but when evidence thereof shall be obtained you will be heartily greeted by—

CARTER.

N. B. Mr. Carlile answered my first and second letters under persuasion that his correspondent was a branch of the worthy-magistrates of the same name in Portsmouth; but having (through his agent) obtained the five Nos. of the Wonder, or, memoirs of my life—his mistake being discovered, from him I received (Sept. 20th) a long letter of eight pages detailing circumstances strictly domestic, and quite irrelevant to the subject under discussion. As besides this it contains but an attempted corroboration of his chosen-hypothesis, *i. e.* No God, No Devil, No bible, No Christian, No true religion, No believer in the one Supreme being—God, *Not even a female!!* Consequently, whether King, Prince, Judge, Clergyman, or *who-else* shall profess to believe in the one Supreme being—God; by him all are declared to be NOT MEN! that letter is but cursorily noticed.

No man can stand before me.

CARLILE.

If I am to fall and my fall optional, to fall before an ATHEISTIC-MASTIFF, or before a *christianized* DUMB-DOG which, with the Wolf at the Church-door cannot bark—the former has the decided preference with—

CARTER.

In the winter of 1812 I heard you preach in Daniel Street: but I recived no benefit from hearing you.

CARLILE

Therefore speak I to them in parables, because, seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand.

BIBLE.

Doubtless you will make a long pause ere you report that by my writings you have received any wrong.

*Thine abode we know,
Because thy dart we feel;
But, O blasphemy,
Where, wast thou born!!*

I grant, that the two first letters we exchanged are correctly printed, and I complain, that you have rather *mistaken* than *misrepresented* the extracts made from the third.

As *order* is not a matter connected with *wonder*, I must follow your plan and pick up scraps for refutation as the eye may alight upon them.

First, as to the words *no man can believe in the one Supreme Being—God*: you receive it as an imputation that there are such believers, but that they are *not men*. This is foreign to the idea meant to be conveyed, and which my words properly convey. *No man*, is an expression of the same import, in common conversation or writing, as *no person*, *nobody*, *none*, or *no one*, and is supposed to include the female as well as the male. It was in this sense, and in this only, that I used the words.

You charge me with contradictions: I rebut the charge. *Almighty Power* and *Almighty Being* seem to be one and the same thing in your mind; but not so in mine, *Being* is a distinct located object of the singular number: such a God as this I cannot discover, though; I have been taught in my youth to respect the words *Almighty God* in token and acknowledgement of such an existence. But this was a false teaching, imposed upon me when I was incapacitated to detect and guard against error. *Power*, is not a distinct, located object, nor strictly an expression in the singular number. A multitude of bodies may congregate their powers and form an *almighty power*; such is my present notion of an *almighty God* an *almighty power*, a power sufficiently mighty to produce the *all* that is produced. The word *God* is nothing more than an abridgement of the Saxon word *Good*, it defines nothing; therefore, I chuse to abstain from its use.

You say "an *almighty-power* cannot be exerted but by an *almighty being*," and call it *demonstration*. No, my friend Isaac, (I call you *friend*, you see, though you as good

as promise me a kicking if I call at your door!) this is not *demonstration*: in your *fancied demonstration* you have demonstrated nothing. Demonstration is a very different thing. Your expression of an *almighty power* necessarily emanating from an *almighty being* is no more correct, than, if you had said, the power of a *mighty army* centers in the *General*. We speak of the power of an army; but we know that such power is congregated by a number of beings. When I speak of an *Almighty Power*, I speak of the congregated powers of the universe, and not of one supreme being—God. So I believe in an *almighty power*, but I do not believe in one supreme being—God: I am sensible of an *almighty power*; but, I am not sensible of one supreme being—God. Here is a clear explanation free from contradiction. This is demonstration. I know that every being has a certain degree of power; but I know of no one being with almighty power. I posed the Vicar of Cerne with this distinction between *almighty power* and *almighty being* within the first five minutes that he was in my company; the consequence was, that his watch reminded him of an urgent engagement to dine at that hour!

There was a time when you were told: "*it's time to be solid, Carter!*" This made an impression upon you which has been the cause of your being a "*Wonder to many!*" With equal seriousness, I repeat, *it's time to be more solid, Carter!* It's time to rest upon nothing but what is solid. Since you first began to be solid, your mind from the taint of youthful incipient error, has been running in a God who rules the universe in the form of a human being, and upon the principle of an earthly absolute monarch. But, this is not being solid, Carter! It is all nonsense! You have not an atom of proof, you can find no demonstration of such a God! But if you will begin to reason about the chemical powers and mechanical forces of the conflicting varieties of matter, gas upon gas, dense bodies upon dense bodies, planet upon planet, and solar system upon solar system, then Carter, you will get upon solid ground in serious mood, and know upon what you are treading! This is what "*I begin to discover:*" and not altogether "*from words spoken or written by Deists.*"

It is granted, that you and many thousands of preachers about the one supreme being—God preach from a sincerity of heart, and upon a conviction, according to the best of your knowledge, that you are preaching the most serious truths; but such a preaching is no demonstration of truth.

Others have as sincerely and as earnestly preached about Ghosts, Witches, Fairies, and a thousand other fantasies, now generally viewed to have been as ridiculous as I view your present preaching to be.

You, Mr. Carter, are evidently unacquainted with the character of the discussions now carrying on about the *one supreme being—God*. The question is now reduced to the consideration, whether intelligence can exist separate from the animal organization. Powers can exist separate from that organization we know, but we do not know, that intelligence can any where be found beyond the human race. According to all existing knowledge, it is necessary, that you prove your God to be an animal, to give it the attributes of intelligence and design. There, Isaac Carter, is matter as solid as a bone for you to pick.

Upon another ground: you feel offended at being told that you do not believe in your *one supreme being—God*. You may *hope* that there is such an existence as your imagination has formed of a one supreme being—God: but *hope* and *belief* are two distinct things. *Hope* is a mere creature of the imagination: *belief* a conviction by the aid of the senses. You say, that you have that conviction: but you mistake an action of the imagination for an action of the senses. By which of your senses do you discover the existence of one supreme being—God—by seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, or feeling? Answer me that question Isaac Carter. If you attempt to do it, you will find, that you *do not believe in the one supreme being—God*: but that you have duped yourself by the powers of your imagination, as well as others. Belief is the result of comprehension, clear understanding, clear knowledge, founded either upon ocular evidence or rational probability: can you apply either of these terms to your *one supreme being—God*—the creature of your imagination, and not your creator?

Had you printed the whole of my third letter, it would have been seen that I did not make any engagements with David Bogue's students about becoming a missionary to the heathen; that I did not then make any profession of religion; that I did not mix up the matter of marriage, employ, and want of employ, with that with which you mix it up. You have not been exactly scrupulous, in your constructions upon the contents of that letter. Had I a copy, it should be printed. I know there has long been a great deal of enmity between you and David Bogue and his students; but you are not justified in what you have said of me, or them, in your second letter, I invite you to print the whole of that letter.

As to what you say about my arrogance and insult, I can smile, knowing, that it has no foundation in any thing I have written to you. It is you who insult me, when you say that your dwelling is too moral to welcome such an immoral step as mine over its threshold. Be easy, I will not disturb you farther, unless you can find something to say in answer to this letter. There are men in England whose company I desire as a matter of instruction; but the company of Isaac Carter, the Wonder, I can only seek as a matter of amusement, or for his instruction.

Your knowledge is made up of the contents of the Bible. My Bible tells me this, my Bible tells me that, is the common cry of Jew or Christian; but you may be also told that your Bible is a book full of erroneous conclusions, and no where instructive beyond the few moral sentences it may contain: that is to say, it teaches you nothing true about the earth on which we dwell, nor about other planets, nor about the universe, nor about any thing relating to physics. Though there is much said in it about *God* and *Lord God*, of that *much* there is nothing true. It contains a mythology which the Jews borrowed from the Persians and others their neighbours. Where the word *God* is used, the original Hebrew has it *Elohim*, which all translators acknowledge to be plural, and to signify *the Gods*. Christians have attempted to make this an expression of their *trinity*, but it is a fallacious quibble: the expression is strictly correct, and was in common use among the ancients—the *Gods*, the *immortal Gods*. The words *Lord God* are meant to express *the chief of the Gods*, such as Jupiter was considered by both Grecians and Romans. *Jehovah* has no better foundation than *Jupiter*: the two words convey the same idea under a different expression, a mere variation in sound. There can be no religion distinct from idolatry and mythology; because there is no known intelligence superior to man. Think of that and be solid, Carter!

When I say, that I trace the whole of human misery to religion, it is to be explained upon the principle, that misery is the common result of ignorance, or where frauds are practised upon ignorance, and that religion is the chief, the parent cause of all those frauds, and the perpetuating cause of ignorance. Its tendency is universal degradation among mankind, and that degradation is the root of their misery. It forms a system that is hostile to every change which improvement necessarily introduces.

I am about to address a letter to the Vicar of Cerne, who

is, like yourself, a high Calvinist, in which I shall combat your doctrines about election, fore-ordination, &c. It will better suit a separate letter than to become the tail end of this. I have been hesitating between you and the Vicar to consider which was the highest predestinarian of the two; but I can find no difference, and as I have answered with explanations every thing at which you have carped in my letters, I cannot devote more time and space to you, unless you will print my third letter with further animadversions.

In conclusion, I will take the liberty to offer you advice. Read your Bible as you would read another book, and do not foolishly take every sentence and assertion for truth, because ignorant men have called it a holy writing by inspired penmen. Compare its assertions with the existing state of knowledge, and you will find it erroneous wherever it makes any philosophical pretensions. Consider its moral tendency, when its best characters are depicted as grossly immoral! Consider its pernicious tendency when its upholders would make it a barrier to human knowledge, and pronounce that it alone is sufficient for all beneficial purposes. But above all, consider again, and be solid, Carter, whether such a God as it depicts could ever have had an actual existence. Ask yourself, what is *intelligence*, and from what it results. Try the merits of your ministry upon those who can analyze it—try it upon me. Ask your God to enable you to work a miracle, as a sign that you are a wonder, not by an action upon the imagination, but upon some natural process. Go out on Portsdown Hill for seven days and see whether the Ravens will bring you food. Unless you can do what the Ministers of your God's word were wont to do of old, what sign have we that your ministry is the inspiration of superhuman power?

R. CARLILE.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL,

DEAR SIR, Edinburgh, Oct. 31, 1823.

I HAVE read in the 14th No. of your Republican some farther account of the vexatious, oppressive, and shuffling conduct of your persecutors and gaolers towards yourself and your family; your statements may convince every man of liberal mind, that the principles and practice of every one of them, from Judge to Gaoler, deserve the most thorough execration and abhorrence.

The manner in which they have harassed and abused you, is a proof (if others were wanting) of the utter wickedness of their re-

ligious principle, and that their faith has no foundation on truth, but is altogether a castle in the air; and their declining your open challenge of a fair discussion has confirmed and exposed it. If their religion is founded on truth, examination by exhibiting that truth would be a benefit to it; if it were not built upon superstitious legends, they would not fear the most rigid examination of its foundation; if it were not a tissue of sophistry and imposition, they would not fear the strictest criticism of its tenets; if it were not supported by ignorance and superstition, they would not persecute and imprison men who only strove for freedom of discussion, and the liberation of the human mind from thralldom.

With this letter I have sent you a fragment of the second part of my critical remarks (containing chap. 1 and 2 of observation on the instruction given by Jesus Christ) for your examination and insertion in the Republican. The tyrannical manner in which Christians have persecuted and oppressed you, and the boundless praise which they bestow on the person who was the founder of their religion, and who is the object of their worship, for the purity of his doctrines, and the compassion and humanity of his exhortation, has induced me to engage in this enquiry; and in pursuing it, I find that this person has neglected every essential exhortation, or necessary instruction, for promoting the happiness of mankind, or supporting the exalted character bestowed upon him.

The constant attention which my business requires has hitherto prevented me from preparing the work for the press, or even making the manuscript so perfect as I could wish, and may do so for some time; but if you think this fragment worthy of a place in the Republican you may insert it, and if suitable you shall have more at another opportunity.

With respects to your Sister and Mrs. Carlile,

I am, Sir, your sincere friend, ROBERT AFFLECK.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN BY JESUS CHRIST.

Continued from Page 630.

CHAP. II.

Statement of some Crimes which Jesus ought to have forbidden and did not.

IN reviewing the life of Jesus Christ and estimating the value of his instruction to the world, we ought to consider, particularly, what crimes he forbade or threatened with punishment; what duties he commanded or exhorted men to perform: we ought to consider both what he taught, and what he omitted to teach, that we may thus be enabled to appreciate more earnestly the value of his mission, and his usefulness as a reformer.

In pursuing this enquiry, we will find that he did not expressly forbid drunkenness and debaucheries, nor impressed upon the minds of mankind the pernicious consequences of these ruinous vices, which reduce men below the level of the beasts, and are the fertile source of crimes and misery. These vices required particular attention, as they were not forbidden in the law of Moses, and have been too prevalent in all ages of the world; but instead of reforming men from drunkenness he rather encouraged them in it, by making, on one occasion at a marriage feast, a large quantity of water into wine (if the story is true) for the use of the guests, when they were *well drunk* before; this would make them still more drunk and lead them into a complete debauch. In this particular Mahomet appears to advantage when compared with him, for he expressly forbade his followers to drink wine, and sincere Mahometans still abstain from it entirely.

When Jesus was predicting his second coming (if he spoke these words) he indeed charged his disciples to beware lest at any time they should be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness; but this exhortation was addressed to them particularly, to put them on their guard lest they should be taken by surprise drunk when he came; it was not addressed to mankind in general on account of the pernicious effects of this vice*.

He did not expressly forbid whoredom and adultery, nor point out to mankind the pernicious consequences of these ensnaring vices, which corrupt the heart, and ruin the virtue, the morals, and the happiness of every one who indulges in them; he did not exhort mankind to abstain from these vices, he only once mentioned the subject in his sermon on the mount, when he says, (Matthew, chap. v. ver. 28) "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart:" though this over-strained saying is a proof that Jesus condemned adultery, it is not a proper command to abstain from it, and it is obviously unjust; for the man who, from his organization, is afflicted with strong natural passions, if he resist these passions, and confine them to his own mind, he has not committed a crime; if he can prevent them breaking out into action, he has merit and cannot be condemned. A vice so ensnaring in its progress, and so ruinous in its consequences as whoredom required a more particular command or exhortation to prevent it, than any which Jesus has given; he ought to have forbidden it, and defined the punishment which

* The expounders of scripture have directed our attention to a passage in the Old Testament, which they say is a prophecy of Jesus: we are there told, (Gen. chap. xlix. ver. 11, 12,) that the Shiloh, would wash his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes, and that his eyes should be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk: if this passage is not a poetical figure, it is clear that the character foretold was to be a bloated drunkard, and if Jesus was the person, it is no wonder that he was called (Luke chap. vii. ver. 34,) a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber; because to fulfil the prophecy, he must have been very familiar with the juice of the grapes.

it deserved, but when a case of adultery was brought before him, expressly to know what judgment he would pronounce, whether he would decide by the law of Moses, (which awarded death for this transgression) or propose a new and more perfect law; he left the people in utter uncertainty what he meant, even when they pressed him to give his opinion; his behaviour was the most unsatisfactory that can well be conceived, he stooped down and wrote with his finger on the ground, as if he had not heard them; and as long as they were present and asking his decision in the case, he would only say, "he that is without sin among you let him first cast a stone at her," and again he stooped down and wrote on the ground, apparently to weary them out; and when he had tired them all, that they went out and left him and the woman alone, he told her that he did not condemn her, to go and sin no more: in this he decided nothing, nor told whether he approved of the law of Moses concerning adultery, or meant, as a reformer, to substitute a milder punishment in its place: this was highly improper, he ought at once to have given a clear and decisive opinion on the subject, as a direction to his followers; but in this, as in many other things, he has left them to make laws, to reform or check themselves as they best may.

He did not forbid the abominable practice of polygamy, so general over all the earth; this was tolerated by the law of Moses, (Deut. chap. xxi. ver. 15) and generally practised by the great characters in the Old Testament, even to a great extent by their most *holy* king David, Solomon, and several others; yet he did not exhort men to abstain from this lascivious and tyrannical custom, although it was, and is, productive of much misery, as hundreds of females were kept in confinement, and their freedom and happiness sacrificed to the caprice and luscious gratification of a luxurious tyrant. Although this was openly and generally practised when Jesus was on earth, yet he passed over it without notice: since his time his apostles and followers have abolished this custom, and in this have made a reformation without his direction.

He did not exhort mankind to abstain from lying, cheating, and swindling, vices which his countrymen are said to be much addicted to. Those crimes were not expressly forbidden, nor threatened with any punishment in the law of Moses; and as they often elude the punishment of every law, he ought, as a reformer, and the founder of a new religion, to have given particular exhortations to every one to abstain from such vices, yet he did not once notice them.

Instead of recommending truth and reproving lying, he set an example of speaking falsehoods himself, in saying to his disciples when sending them out, (Matt. chap. x. ver. 23) "verily ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the son of man be come," and when he said, (chap. xiv. ver. 28) "there be some standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom," besides many other instances.

He did not forbid robbery, plunder, or peculation, which were

much practised at the time he was on earth, and have been too common at all times. These are crimes which the law of Moses had neither forbidden, nor defined the punishment of, when committed; and surely they required his attention as a reformer; yet he did not exhort his followers to abstain from them, he did not threaten them with any punishment if guilty, nor yet direct them to resist or punish the robbers; on the contrary he says, "whosoever taketh away thy coat let him have thy cloak also;" if this direction were followed thieves and robbers would soon be enriched and honest men reduced to beggary.

He did not forbid assassination and murder, though crimes of the deepest dye and the most ruinous consequences, producing much misery and affliction, not only in the agonizing sufferings of the victim, but by the loss of a parent, the hopes of a family may be destroyed, and the whole plunged into sorrow and reduced to wretchedness and want. As these crimes were in many cases approved of in the Old Testament, and were too common when he was on earth, they certainly required his attention as the saviour of the world; yet he neither commanded nor exhorted his followers to abstain from them: nor gave any directions to resist or punish the murderer and assassin: on the contrary he says, "resist not evil," and instead of threatening murderers with future punishment, he says, "all manner of transgression shall be forgiven unto man, but blaspheming the Holy Ghost, which shall never be forgiven." He threatened men with the punishment of hell for words or opinions, and promised forgiveness for atrocious crimes. Heaven and hell seem to have been prepared to regulate opinion, not to prevent crimes nor encourage virtue.

He did not forbid the cruel and barbarous practice of taking fellow creatures captives in war, or even prisoners for debt, reducing men, women, and children to slavery; and holding them in bondage to labour for supporting their idleness and luxury.

This crime, which was expressly allowed by the law of Moses, (Exodus, chap. xxi.) and was practiced among all nations to a boundless extent, at the time he was on earth, certainly deserved particular attention from one who pretended to be the saviour of mankind; yet he neither forbade, nor exerted himself to soften the rigours of this extensive system of cruelty and misery, which places the lives and happiness of one part of mankind under the caprice and tyranny of another; which banishes justice from among men, and introducing oppression and cruelty, poisons all the sources of virtue; making one class of mankind cruel, unfeeling tyrants, and the other class debased and abject slaves. It tends to destroy every kind and humane feeling in the breast of the master, and generates habits of cruelty and haughtiness in their stead: it accustoms them to injustice, tyranny, and oppression from their infancy at home, and protects them and their children in trampling on the rights, and sporting with the sufferings and miseries of their fellow creatures; being accustomed to cru-

elty and oppression from childhood, their habits are prepared for every kind of tyranny and wickedness.

The effects of this iniquitous system on the minds and habits of the slaves, are still more pernicious, being deprived of liberty, subjected to the lash, and suffering constant injustice and oppression without hope of redress; being forced to labour and toil regardless of their grief or sorrow, their pleasure or pain, for the profit of, and enjoyment of, their masters; having their feelings stifled and their hopes ruined, their minds are debased and rendered almost incapable of a generous sentiment, or a noble action, and hardly capable of enjoying liberty if given them. Such was the hopeless condition of many millions of human beings when Jesus was on earth, yet he did not relieve any of them from misery nor ameliorate their condition: he did not testify against the evil at the time, nor exhort his followers to abolish it: he never exhorted oppressors to cease their cruelties and crimes, but always the injured party to suffer and forgive.

In his direction concerning slaves Mahomet exceeded him either in humanity or policy, for he commanded his followers to set the slaves at liberty who embraced his religion, which command they continue to obey; but the worshippers of Jesus having no such instruction from him, have not been so generous or liberal; they have still kept their slaves in bondage though Christians, and have carried on the traffic in slave trade for ages without scruple or remorse; not being forbidden by any command or exhortation from Christ or his apostles, they seem hardly to have considered it a crime. The Christian sovereigns and nobles of Europe, in the middle ages, extended and consolidated this cruel oppression into a national system, and reduced their poorer countrymen so completely to slavery, that they were bought and sold with the land on which they lived; and they still remain in that state of bondage in the most Christian countries of Russia and Austria to this day. In more modern times the Christian nations of Europe extended the scourge of the slave trade to Africa, where their agents stirred up wars among the different tribes for the horrid purpose of making slaves of the prisoners; when this supply was found insufficient to satisfy their avidity, their agents have often seized the peaceable inhabitants of whole villages, and carried them off by force. In these cruel and horrid scenes the tender feelings of our nature have been and are completely disregarded, for in many cases the nearest and dearest friends are violently torn asunder, the affectionate husband and wife, the fond parents and tender children, brothers and sisters are separated without pity or remorse, and carried away on shipboard in close confinement and chains to a distant shore, and there again sold and sent off in chains amidst bitter lamentations, under the lash of the drivers to distant and different lands, without the hope of ever seeing one another more. In these strange lands the remainder of their life is spent in hopeless labour and toil to support the splendour and luxury of their oppressors.

These barbarous transactions were not forbidden by Jesus, nor threatened with any punishment; and are still continued by his zealous followers, natives of countries where his worship is the established religion.

He might have seen many of the miseries of slavery when he was on earth, and ought to have prevented or corrected them. If he is a God he must see these cruelties still practiced over a great part of the world, and ought to put an end to them: it is cruel and criminal indifference to suffer these crimes to be perpetrated if he can prevent them; their continuation is a strong argument against his knowledge and compassion, a proof that he has no feeling for the sorrows, nor any sympathy for the sufferings, of the human race.

If he plead with his father for the pardon of these Christian robbers and tyrants, it is an indelible stain on his character. If these Christian oppressors are received into heaven notwithstanding their crimes, and the oppressed slaves are sent to hell for unbelief and made to suffer both here and hereafter, (as Christian teachers have inculcated) it is such monstrous injustice that their devil himself could scarcely be more cruelly unjust.

He did not forbid, nor attempt to soften the horrors of war, that greatest scourge of humanity, which his countrymen had carried on with exterminating cruelty, and which has produced in every age, wide spread desolation and misery. He did not exhort mankind to abstain from that wholesale work of destruction, in which they have been most extensively engaged; although this "mad business," has in all ages spread havoc and devastation over every land, and has produced grief and sorrow to almost every family; thousands being every year forced away for soldiers at the command of tyrannical governments; and regardless of every feeling being wounded, and every tender connection being broken, they are compelled to engage in wars in which they have no interest, and to butcher their fellow men with whom they never had a quarrel. This cruel scourge of the world instead of punishing wickedness and vice, of correcting evil and producing good, has always been a fertile source of cruelties and crimes, of suffering and sorrow, which often falls heaviest on the innocent.

When men are collected together in thousands for war, their manners are corrupted, then evil passions are roused, and they become accustomed to every vice, and hardened in every crime; through hardships, suffering, and fatigue, they become careless of their own lives, and regardless of the lives of others; by inflicting injuries of all kinds on each other, their passions are inflamed and continued, and the mischief committed in one quarrel is sure to produce others in succession. Besides, the cruelties committed on the field of battle, the treatment of prisoners of war in these early times was barbarous, slavery or death; and in every age and country as the theatre of war, the peaceable inhabitants suffer much injustice and oppression, their houses often burnt, and their property plundered and destroyed; this produces famine and sick-

ness in which the innocent often suffer more than the guilty agents. It certainly deserved his immediate attention, and his utmost exertions, to put an end to so much cruelty and suffering, yet he neither exerted his power to prevent these miseries, nor his wisdom by directions to soften their horrors. He did not threaten the ambitious tyrants who were the cause of these evils, nor those who were the willing instruments in perpetrating them, with any kind of punishment; on the contrary, he said, that "he came not to send peace on earth but a sword." If he came for this purpose, it would have been good for the world that he had never been born; how could he contemplate these scenes of sorrow and wretchedness and utter such an expression; the prevention of so much misery was worthy of his utmost exertion, and he ought to have done it to support the character he claimed.

If he had not power to prevent those evils, we have no proof that he was the son of God; if he had power to prevent them and did not, we have as little proof of his love or compassion for mankind; if he had not power to put an end to war, yet as the founder of a religion which was to reform mankind, he ought to have pointed out the evils arising from it, and have expressly forbidden his followers even to engage in it; but he gave no exhortation sufficient to stop it, nor any directions which made men more humane when engaged in it: the comparative humanity in the modern practice of war, is more owing to the knowledge and civilization spread by means of the printing press, than to any of his exhortations.

He did not forbid, nor endeavour to abolish the combats of Gladiators in the Roman Amphitheatres, although thousands of these unfortunate men, who had been trained for the purpose, were forced to fight and murder one another in these barbarous spectacles, for the amusement of a cruel and licentious people. These inhuman shows were practised to a great extent over the Roman Empire at the time he was on earth, and long before it, yet he did not exhort his worshippers to avoid or abolish them; they continued to be exhibited even in Christian Rome for some hundreds of years after his time. The Roman Nobles who instituted and exhibited such games, and the people who gazed on them with pleasure, deserve our most thorough detestation and abhorrence; what shall we say of the being who could prevent all these evils yet never once forbade them?

He did not forbid the detestable practise of making eunuchs, which had for ages been very prevalent in the east; he even mentions it, Matthew chap. xix. ver. 12, with seeming approbation, as a fit preparation for the kingdom of heaven!

He did not forbid cruelty to animals, working beasts of burden to death, and making other creatures fight with each other for amusement. Although the barbarous custom was extensively practised in the Roman public games at the time he was on earth, and in every country has caused much unnecessary torture and pain; though such scenes harden and vitiate the human heart,

accustoming those who witness such scenes to be cruel to their fellow men; yet he gave no commands to his disciples nor any exhortation to mankind to refrain from their cruel practices.

It would be endless to enumerate all the evils which he ought to have corrected, and the crimes which he might have prevented; the whole would have been best accomplished by correcting the imperfect organization of the human frame, and reforming the vicious habits of all mankind.

It was a proof, of folly, caprice, and cruelty, rather than of wisdom, justice, and mercy, to pass over so many vices and crimes, such as drunkenness and debauchery, whoredom and adultery, polygamy, lying, cheating and swindling, robbery and plunder, assassination, and murder, traffic in slaves, wars, combats of gladiators, cruelty to animals, &c. without expressly commanding or exhorting his followers to refrain from them; and, on the other hand, to denounce words or opinions with eternal punishments, to threaten with hell fire whoever said thou fool, to say that a man had better have a milstone hanged about his neck and be cast into the sea, rather than offend one of his little ones, to say that it was easier to declare that blaspheming the Holy Ghost should never be forgiven, to threaten the scribes and pharisees with the damnation of hell, for hypocrisy, to threaten that Capernaum should be brought down to hell for not believing on him, to menace those who would not receive his disciples with severer punishments at the day of judgment than Sodom and Gomorrah, and finally that those who did not believe on him should be damned!

In receiving the instructions of Jesus Christ, and considering what he performed and what he neglected, we find there were many great evils and flagrant crimes openly committed, and daily practised, at the time he was on earth; which he neither endeavoured to prevent, nor forbade his followers to practice; nor yet threatened with any kind of punishment; consequently we may well doubt the utility of his mission, and question his abilities as a reformer.

CHAP. III.

Statement of some duties which Jesus neglected to teach.

HAVING stated what crimes Jesus neglected to prevent, and omitted to forbid, we may next consider what duties he commanded his followers, or exhorted mankind to perform, and also state what he neglected or omitted.

We are led to conclude by his words on several occasions, that kings, rulers, and rich men, cannot enter heaven, but are certain of hell; yet he did not endeavour to correct their wicked practices, nor instruct them better in their duty. He did not exhort kings and legislators to make wise, just, and equitable laws, to regulate the conduct of their subjects; and to cause these laws to be administered with impartiality to all, both high and low. He did

not exhort them to be humane, just and merciful, in the exercise of their authority; and to check the abuse of power on those who were under them. He could hardly be ignorant that kings and governors have often abused their authority, and oppressed their people, producing great and extensive misery among them; yet he did not exhort them to cease their oppressions. He did not endeavour by timorous exhortation to prevent injustice and tyranny, consequently many very religious Christian sovereigns have oppressed their subjects in the most barbarous manner, and in the cause of religion have sacrificed them in thousands in the flames and on the scaffold for the glory and honour of his name: this ought to have been foreseen and prevented.

He neither endeavoured to protect the people from tyrannical misrule, nor instructed them to resist injustice and oppression, and protect themselves. He did not instruct nations to limit the power, and define the authority of their rulers, and to make them subject to the established laws: all his exhortations are addressed to the poor and oppressed, directing them to suffer with patience, not to resist evil.

He did not exhort Magistrates to preserve the peace, and promote the happiness of the people over whom they are placed; to administer justice without favour alike to all, both rich and poor; he neither pointed out their duties, nor exhorted them to obey the laws, and by their upright conduct to shew a good example to the people. He addressed no exhortation whatever to Magistrates, nor does he appear to have expected that any of his followers would ever be either Magistrates or rulers.

He did not exhort the people to obey the laws, and to support the Magistrates when they administered the laws with justice and impartiality; he did not inform the people concerning either their duties or their rights, nor did he instruct them to defend their families and property from oppression; he seems to have taught that the people had no rights whatever, and that worldly privileges were not worth either acquiring or defending.

He did not exhort masters to promote the comfort and welfare of their servants or slaves, to exercise their authority with moderation and humanity, never to give unlawful or unreasonable commands, and always to shew an example of uprightness and sobriety for their servants to follow; did he think that a master's tyranny was not to be either checked or resisted?

He did not exhort servants to obey their masters in every thing lawful and reasonable; to promote their interest and prosperity to the utmost of their power, and to shew by their upright conduct that they deserve good usage from their masters. He seems rather to have thought such exhortation unworthy of his attention.

He did not exhort husbands to love and respect their wives, to treat them with kindness and respect, to promote their comfort and happiness as much as possible, to live and cohabit with them alone, to avoid all loose and wicked company, and never to spend

their substance in drinking and debauchery; but in all respects to shew such an upright example as they would ever desire their wives to follow; on the contrary he rather advised husbands to forsake their wives, by promising that whosoever left house or lands, wife or children, for his sake should receive a hundred fold and life everlasting, this promise could not fail to have a powerful effect on the minds of the ignorant enthusiasts.

He did not exhort wives to honour and respect their husbands, to submit to them in every thing reasonable, to strive to promote their comfort and happiness, to attend with care to the domestic concerns of their families, to consider their husbands' interest inseparable from their own; and in all respects to shew such a purity of conduct as will give satisfaction to their husbands: such advices were too gross and earthly for his heavenly mind, he seems rather to have wished that among his followers there should be neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

He did not exhort parents to provide for their families, to attend with care to the education and instruction of their children, to cultivate their minds and keep them free from prejudice and superstition, to instruct them in the principles of morality, to impress upon their minds the excellence and utility of virtuous action and the pernicious consequences of vice and crime, and themselves to add example to precept. He did not warn them of the mischiefs arising from idleness, nor directed them to put their children to some useful occupation when able for it, and endeavour to get them settled in business that they might become good members of society.

Were such humble exhortations as those unworthy of his attention, or contrary to his disposition? his advice and discretion are very different; instead of exhorting parents to provide for their families he directed them (Matthew, Chap. vi. ver. 10,) not to lay up treasures on earth where moth and rust doth corrupt, and he charged them (ver. 26,) to take no thought for their life what they should eat or drink, nor yet for their bodies what they should put on! Instead of exhorting parents to be careful of their children, he promised great rewards to those who forsook their children to follow him, and he declared that he came to make parents and children enemies to one another. Instead of correcting prejudices he seems to have nourished them, and certainly displayed great national prejudice himself, in commanding his apostles when he sent them out to preach, not to go to either the Gentiles or Samaritans. Instead of dissipating superstition he fostered it, by his dark and imperfect descriptions of a future state, and by ascribing diseases to possession with the devil. Instead of recommending education he seems to have despised learning, and contemned knowledge, and wandering about the country he appears to have accounted better than a settled trade.

He did not exhort children to reverence and honour their parents, to obey them, and follow their advice and instruction, in

every thing lawful, to improve their time in learning, to be quiet and inoffensive, to be industrious in business, and to assist their parents in advanced years, when they need support or assistance. Instead of exhorting children to obey their parents, he set an example of disregard or disobedience himself when about twelve years old, in leaving his own parents in Jerusalem, without telling them in what he was engaged, though they were seeking him for three days sorrowing. He set an example of irreverence when he said to his mother, woman what have I to do with thee mine hour is not yet come? He told his followers that he came to set parents and children at variance; and he declared that "he who hateth not his father and his mother could not be his disciple." In the prime of life he wandered about idle and neither recommended industry by exhortation nor example.

He did not give plain and practicable directions for the rule of men's conduct in life, he did not exhort men to be kind, humane and merciful to each other; to provide for the relief and support of the distressed, the old and infirm, he did not exhort men to live soberly and decently, and to perform the various duties of their stations in life, faithfully to be honest in their dealings and upright in all their transactions; to pay their just debts and never to deceive nor take any undue advantage of each other. He did not threaten men with any punishment in a future life, for unjust or wicked practices in this nor did he promise to reward them for justice and uprightness with happiness hereafter; directions concerning the payment of debts made no part of his instructions, for he always recommended that they should be forgiven.

Although Jesus neglected many instructions of great importance yet on one occasion he gave his benediction to some disposition; and his approbation of a benevolent line of conduct, in a manner that would excuse some omissions in an ordinary man: he (Matthew chap. x.) pronounced blessings on those who are meek, on those who are merciful, on the pure in heart, and on the peace makers. These dispositions are so excellent, and such virtues are so beneficial to the world, that they deserve greater rewards than his benediction have generally procured them: he also gave one moral percept concerning our duties in society, which cannot be surpassed, he said (Matthew chap. viii. ver. 12,) all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets: this excellent precept is deserving of the most sincere approbation, but it is not given in either the law or the prophets; it is a precept derived from the lesson of the ancient philosophers, and Jesus did not act according to it himself, when he caused the herd of swine to be drowned. He also said, (Matthew chap. xxii. ver. 39) "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," this direction was no doubt well meant, but cannot be obeyed; and these wise sayings, and rational exhortations, are so intermixed and counteracted, by unnatural, and pernicious direction, not to resist

evil; and to turn our cheek to be smitten; to give our cloak to whoever takes our coat; to go two miles with whoever compels us to go with them one; to love our enemies, and to hate our friends; to bless them that curse us; to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them that despitefully use and persecute us; and take no thought to provide for ourselves either food or clothes, they are so overshadowed by these that their good effects are scarcely visible.

His worshippers who are good members of society, are but little indebted to his instructions for improvement; they are rather improved by the particular circumstances in which they are placed and entitled to respect for their own good dispositions; if they have been benefitted by his instructions, they have had the good sense to select the best, and reject the others; for those who believe his doctrines most sincerely, seldom attempt to put all his directions in practice; they hold most of them as figurative, and explain them according to their own views or wishes; always something different from his own words. His directions are not the foundation of good morals and upright conduct, these (as well as evil) arise out of man's organization, modified by circumstances; and are so necessary to the peace of society, that they have been respected in all ages, and valued the bond of it. Men were as upright in their conduct before he was born as after his death; and if he had never existed an upright line of conduct would always have been followed by men of good disposition, and practised or approved of in every community in proportion as they became civilized.

From the foregoing observations we may conclude, that if Jesus came to the earth to reform mankind, he has either been unequal to the task or has greatly neglected his duty; instead of acting like the son of God, he did not display the courage and abilities of many an ordinary man; he did not accomplish his object so completely as many other reformers recorded in history; he was not equal to Paul for enterprise and activity in teaching his own religions, he has not been equal to Luther, Calvin, or Knox, to Thomas Paine, or Richard Carlile, for boldness in attacking a corrupt old system, or in clearness of mind, and comprehensive views in proposing a more perfect system in its stead; he has not been equal to the benevolent Mr. Owen for conceiving, explaining, and organizing, an extensive plan, for enlightening the minds, and gently improving the condition, of the human race.

Printed and Published by R. CARLILE, 84, Fleet Street.—All Correspondences for "The Republican" to be left at the place of publication.